# Seattle Light Rail Review Panel
# Meeting Notes for April 1, 2003

## Agenda Items

- North Link Update
- McClellan Station 90%
- Beacon Hill Update

**Panel Members Present**

- Don Royse
- Jack Mackie
- Mimi Sheridan
- Matthew Kitchen
- Jay Lazerwitz
- Tom Bykonen

**Staff Present**

- Debora Ashland, Sound Transit
- John Walser, Sound Transit
- Carol Valenta, Sound Transit (STart)
- Kathy Dockins, CityDesign
- Lisa Rutzick, CityDesign
- Cheryl Sizov, CityDesign
- Katherine Claeys, SDoT

## LRRP Business

Cheryl announced Lisa Rutzick as her replacement and gave a brief history of Lisa's experience as a Land Use Planner with DCLU and Madrona Planning. This is a good time for the transition as we're about to start with North Link. Lisa spoke a little about herself, and said she is excited to be starting this work. All Panel Members present introduced them selves, Carolyn and George aren't here, and we're currently short one Arts Commissioner. Lisa can work on that when the time comes.

Cheryl spoke a little about last month's Light Rail Review Panel retreat. Kathy has finished typing the notes from the meeting, but rather that distribute them, she will give them to Lisa. Lisa will work on compiling the information as part of her "initiation." She, Cheryl, and Kathy will also contact the survey respondents in the near future.

The next meeting will be held June 17, and the primary agenda item is Beacon Hill 90% design. Jack encourages the Panel Members and other to drive down Airport Way and see where the maintenance base will be. Demolition is on schedule. John Walser adds that after the evaluation process, board approval, and bids we should be ready for the FFGA in mid-July to early August. The action for McClellan Station as assigned to Jay.

# North Link Update

*Ron Endlich, Sound Transit*

**Background and Proposal:**

Ron's last update for the Panel was about a month ago. The project is still moving forward, although there have been some schedule changes. The Sound Transit Board made a motion for Sound Transit to do additional work, which will push the EIS date from May to August. Subsequently, the Board's decision on a preferred route will be in October instead of July.

They have preliminary findings on rider information, cost information, and construction risk information for seven different routes. Cost and construction risk are the two major areas of focus for the next 8-12 weeks.

Crossing the ship Canal, Montlake is the most attractive location because of its good soil conditions. The Board wants additional drilling work in the Ship Canal in order to understand the soil conditions. The drilling will allow us to gain additional geo-tech information about the Ship Canal, and needs to be finished by 4/15 to accommodate salmon migration. There will also be additional design review work with WSDoT, as there are major issues regarding freeway impacts of Link. Some work will be re-reviewed with Dot to make sure there are no "fatal flaws" including the segment between Roosevelt and Northgate.

The University of Washington Board of Regents is primarily concerned about EMF impacts on their research facility and hospital; that is why they have issues with Montlake.

**Questions and Discussion:**

- *Isn't there subway under MIT and other universities? They don't seem to have a problem with it.* We've been looking at other universities like that, especially research universities and hospitals. Johns Hopkins is a good example; others are not directly analogous. We may try using a floating slab to mitigate the EMF.

- *After the route is selected, who is part of the preliminary engineering assessment? Will it be the same team for construction?* We're about 5% complete at the conceptual engineering phase. PSTC is the group we'll have from this point through final engineering. At preliminary engineering, there will be separate procurement. The station architects will probable not cover the same level of detail since we've had to push back our schedule. OR plan is to have the station architects on board in November. There will be four to six stations between Downtown and Northgate, depending on the preferred route. The primary architects will be on board for preliminary engineering, with a different team for construction.
- *I remember the station at 45$^{th}$ needing high-speed elevators, so if you go with cut and cover you'll have escalators and stairs instead. There should be a cost reduction there. I guess we'll just wait and see; we wish you (Sound Transit) the best with your University of Washington negotiations.*
- *How is the cost estimate process/risk analysis relevant to the EIS and the decision?* There is less risk in ridership calculation. We have developed different ridership estimates based on different routes. Should we look further at those estimates to see if they're conservative or not? Sensitivity

analysis…primary are of risk… It is not a matter of what is unsavory or not. There are seven possible routes between Downtown and Northgate: four that go farther that that. Between those, there are 30 possible permutations of route alignment. We can't really look more thoroughly at each one. This is more of a quantitative analysis that a cost/benefit analysis, which is typical of transportation projects.

- *How will Station Area Planning (SAP) work and change if the stations themselves change?* The city of Seattle has done SAP for some stations. If we pick some for which SAP was not done, then City staff may want to do more SAP work. IT will depend on what the preferred alignment is.
- *We should get Calvin Chow to come back in the near future to talk to us about that.*
- *There are both good sides and shortcomings to SAP; let's just not re-do the shortcomings.*

## McClellan Station 90% Design:

*John Walser, Sound Transit, Lesley Bain, Weinstein AU, Paul Tong, OTAK,*

You originally saw 60% design for McClellan Back in July/August. We incorporated further artwork and presented it again in October. 90% of today's presentation will be the first look at construction documents; 10% will be for the remaining details and comments.

### Background and Proposal:

Boxwood did the lead design from 30 to 60%. OTAK teamed with Boxwood for 60 to 90%. The Landmarks Board approved Cheasty in December 2002. The Winthrop/Cheasty area will be the focus tonight. The 720 segment includes Beacon Hill Tunnel to the corner of 26th and McClellan, then crosses over 26th Avenue and continues above grade to MLK. Dropping down to at-grade to meeting 730 (the at-grade segment is not detailed for 730) 720 will use the same color as 730, but will not continue the wave and will tie into the landscaping.

There's a new bus facility, the light at the intersection is new as well. The Stevens Street Plaza will include a Link marker. The neighborhoods have worked with Sound Transit on the Town Center plan to establish the main guidelines for further design development for McClellan. They want a free-standing, recognizable station that doesn't dominate. They also want future development to front onto the street (pedestrian corridor). The University of Washington Laundry is nearby. The platforms are 380 feet long and 32 feet high. Traffic will be coming in from South Forest or Rainier. The elevator, stairs, escalators, and the ticket vending in the lobby will have "off hours" from 1AM to 5PM. Security grilles will close the station. There will be two emergency-only staircases at the north end. Sound Transit has been rethinking the structure within the station area. It was designed, however too far in advance and consequently has not been altered much, but artwork will help. ARCO will be the construction staging site; the gas station itself will be demolished. Sound Transit will lease the property until construction is complete and the property will revert back to the gas station owner. It may not be allowed to be rebuilt as a gas station.

The signage includes identification markers at the entrance to Stevens Street, the corner of Rainier and Forest. It also extends to the parking levels and includes the station

name. There will be electronic message boards throughout the station which will incorporate surveillance cameras. The materials used will be brick, steel, and glazing. There are two color schemes for the brick; red columns every 40 feet and 5-tone on the walls. The glazing will be framed with grey aluminum. Exposed steel members are finished with the Sound Transit dark grey color. The canopy is under the guideway structure. The mid-section has been removed to accommodate the cobra head chandelier artwork, which hands down eight feet. The lights face upward, illuminating the ceiling which is painted in a sky cloud motif (The Sky Within). The lights may change colors as well.

The wall is composed of glass blocks. Black granite pavers will be in the plaza with black inserts and stairs. The tread will be black granite; the riser will be grey mottled granite, and the platform will be a matte slate color. The canopy slope will be lowered to increase rain protection areas. The primary community issue is that the station be safe and protected, yet open. That's been addressed with the glazing.

There will be 12 foot light poles every 20 feet to illuminate the surface of the plaza. The building will also have down ward facing fixtures every 16 feet along the alley. In the glass elevator shaft, two "uplights" are proposed to wash the roof of the elevator shaft. The light for the open space will be wide open and programmable on a seasonal basis.

Weinstein AU hopes to create a city-shaping station to help form what this place will become. People will be coming to this station from all directions. We tried to use simple materials to accommodate may functions. Horizontal plane materials with a concrete pattern are our effort t to break out of the urban grid. An abstract trellis reflecting artwork will be along the touchdown structure along the SW side at the NE wall.

We're working on a balance between urban and natural at Cheasty Blvd, somewhat "Olmstedian". The columnar trees were not received well because they are deciduous; however if columnar trees are used then there should be more. The portal's emphasis will be on moving through the space quickly; the station's emphasis will be on waiting and sitting. Consequently there will be a lot of variety and color with feature plantings. The planters will have very detailed design.

The portal is de-emphasized as an element. We hope that future development will encompass this eventually. We'll have landscaping in the interim. It's challenging to keep the touchdown structure interesting and still keep people away from it. The landscaping will consist of diagonal hedge lines with some large boulders scattered around. There will be witch hazel and a green base. All plants will have irrigation.

We used Mt. Baker Blvd as a model for Cheasty. There is a variety of tree species, big shade trees, lawn, and some ground cover. The Parks Department is finishing the Master Plan for the continuation of Cheasty Blvd. Pedestrian lighting will include a 12 foot globe light. The Parks Department wants to include a gateway marker (a stone column at two locations) and transition the sidewalk to a gravel path. Sound Transit wants to avoid lawns.

**Discussion:**

- *How high are the stone columns under the guide way and what is the underside height?* 35 feet and about 25 feet, The gateway features have been moved

closer to the boulevard to clarify that you are entering the boulevard. It is similar to Mt. Baker and the arboretum boulevard designs.

- *We'd like to see the future development of a landscaped median on Cheasty instead of asphalt.* The Landmarks Board presented a design for Cheasty Blvd. ST is waiting to hear feedback from them.
- *Is the raised track way colored?* No it is treated with WSDoT standard grey stain.
- *Does it change where the ramp starts?* We've deleted the canopy midsection to accommodate the artwork. Where is weather protection provided? Under the guideway.
- *All the color appears to be dark grey while the other stations are dark blue.* ST is using its two colors throughout: dark blue and dark grey. The five-tone brick is to be installed in a random pattern.
- *How do you write specs for a random brick design pattern?*
- *The tower at the top of the elevator is glazed on all four sides, but not on tops?* It will always be illuminated as a beacon or tower lantern.
- *Where is the patterned glass brick?* There is glass block at the stair wall from 7 feet to the guideway structure. There is some on the top of the wall too; it is about rail height for the escalator. It is the same glass block as the Bacon Hill team.
- *Are there development requirements for the ARCO site?* The existing zoning code is now subject to the station area overlay.
- *Who bears the cost of environmental clean-up (decommissioning the underground storage tank?)* ST will likely bear the burden of environmental clean-up.
- *I'd like to compliment ST and the designers for approaching the station as a building. The scattered brick pattern will reduce the sense of bulk. Is the elevator cab enclosed?* Yes, it is a glass cab. The light within this elevator shaft will be important as a beacon.
- *Is there seating? How is the area policed when the station is closed?* One planter is raised and is sitting width. ST has the opportunity to add benches.
- *I like the architecture and the corrugated planting areas under the touchdown area. That is a good direction.*
- *I'd encourage ST to recognize portable seating value and integrate it. Is it ASA feasible?* There will be vendor cart storage and utility hookups provided at several columns. We are working with a display facilitator for an Olmsted design display for the lobby area. It will be different from the display on view at the Water Tower.
- *I'm encouraged that you are working the Olmstead people.*

**Summary and Action:**
The Panel acknowledges the good work in creating the station as a building and the development of the landscape design. The Panel approves the elevator lighting and suggests future moveable seating. This design is approved by all five Panel members present.

## Beacon Hill Update

*Sound Transit*

**Discussion:**

- *The brick design needs to be enlivened.*
- *The trellis needs to be a well-designed feature with plants that will climb with out support or maintenance.*
- *Can the two head houses be tied together?*

At the north end several design solutions are being development. The relative scale is shown in the elevation drawings. We eliminated the canopy so now the artwork on the back wall panels can be more clearly viewed. The grille work facing El Centro should be cut out Mexican artwork. The artist should take the lead and look fabric and communicate with the architect. Art should draw on the rich visual heritage of the neighborhood.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.